



National Weather Service

Storm Data and Unusual Weather Phenomena



December 2002

Location	Date	Time Local/ Standard	Path Length (Miles)	Path Width (Yards)	Number of Persons Killed	Number of Persons Injured	Estimated Damage Property	Estimated Damage Crops	Character of Storm
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MICHIGAN, East

MIZ063

St. Clair

02 0400EST
03 0800EST

0 0

Heavy Snow

An arctic cold front swept through the Great Lakes during the evening of the 2nd and into the early morning hours of the 3rd. A band of snowfall accompanied this front. Most of central Lower Michigan received 1 to 2 inches from the front, with southern Lower Michigan receiving 3 to 5 inches. A band of heavier snow fell across western St Clair county. Northeasterly winds off of Lake Huron may have contributed to the heavier snowfall. While most of the snow ended across the region early in the evening on the 2nd, north-northeasterly winds and very cold air allowed a band of heavy lake effect snow to continue affecting far eastern St Clair county and portions of the Thumb into the early morning hours of the 3rd. By the time the snow ended, snowfall accumulated to 11 inches across the eastern portion of St Clair county, including the city of Port Huron. The western half of the county reported snowfall amounts around 8 inches. Snowfall amounts were generally 6 inches or less across the eastern half of the thumb region. This was the second significant lake effect snowfall in the city of Port Huron in less than a week (refer to November Storm Data for information on the first event).

With the snowfall beginning during the overnight hours across Flint and the tri cities and around rush hour in metro Detroit, roads had become quite slippery by the morning of the 2nd. Hundreds of traffic accidents across eastern Michigan were claimed to have resulted from slippery roads. At least a dozen of those accidents resulted in injury. The only reported deaths from the traffic accidents was that of an elderly couple in Shiawassee County. Nearly 170 flights had to be cancelled at Detroit Metro Airport due to the snowfall.

MIZ076-076

Wayne

03 0800EST
1000EST

2 0

Extreme Cold

Temperatures across the state averaged well below normal the first week of December. Detroit tied a 131-year record low of 3 degrees Fahrenheit on the morning of the 3rd, while a temperature of -8 degrees Fahrenheit broke the record low in Flint. Temperatures across many other locations in eastern Michigan fell below zero during the morning of the 3rd. Combined with the winds, wind chill readings dropped to near 15 degrees below zero. The newspaper reported that a 70-year old homeless man was found frozen to death in the city of Detroit. A 41-year old man was also found lying outside near his home in the city of Detroit, and was pronounced dead at a nearby hospital. Exposure was the suspected cause of the mans death. M70OU, M41OU

MIZ047>048

Midland - Bay

18 0100EST
1000EST

0 0

Ice Storm

A warm front moved north across southern and central Lower Michigan during the morning of the 18th. Rain showers developed along and north of this warm front and affected most of eastern Michigan during the morning of the 18th. With temperatures near the ground below zero, much of this rain fell in the form of freezing rain. The heaviest precipitation occurred across Midland and northern Bay counties, where ice accumulations of around one quarter of an inch were reported, mainly on the roads. Saginaw and Tuscola counties reported around a tenth of an inch of ice accumulations. Across the rest of eastern Michigan, many secondary roadways and overpasses were coated with a thin glazing of ice

Dozens of traffic accidents were reported due to the icy roads during morning rush hour on the 18th. Most of the accidents were reported in the Saginaw Valley. The only fatal accident reported actually occurred in Oakland County's Waterford Township, where a 26-year old man lost control of his car and hit a tree. Icy roadways were the suspected cause. The ice also lead to many school closings across Midland, Bay, Saginaw, Tuscola, and Washtenaw Counties.



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MICHIGAN, East

MIZ075>076-082>083

Washtenaw - Wayne - Lenawee - Monroe

24 2200EST
25 1000EST

0 0

Winter Storm

On Christmas Eve, a storm system moved up into the Ohio Valley and weakened, while another storm intensified off the East Coast. Despite the fact that the initial storm over the Ohio Valley was weakening, the northern edge of this storm system moved across southern and central Lower Michigan and caused several inches of accumulation across much of the area. The snowfall began near the Ohio border late in the evening on Christmas eve, then slowly lifted northward across eastern Michigan on Christmas morning. The heaviest snowfall amounts occurred across Lenawee, Monroe, Washtenaw and Wayne counties, where 5 to 7.5 inches of accumulation were reported. The highest snowfall totals were; 6 inches in Adrian, 7 inches in Dundee, 7.5 inches in Milan, 6.8 inches in Wyandotte, and 6.5 inches at Detroit Metro Airport. Washtenaw County even declared a snow emergency, ticketing vehicles left parked on the street. The rest of eastern Michigan received 3 to 5 inches of snowfall, with the Flint and Lapeer areas reporting 5.5 inches. Given the large amount of holiday travelers, dozens of traffic accidents were reported across the region. No injuries or deaths were reported.